

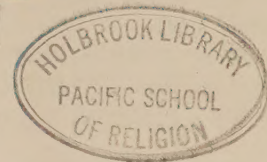


# The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● NOVEMBER 1977

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# Care for the Seeds of Tomorrow



The 14th of November which is Nehru's birthday is observed as Children's Day. Invariably in our churches Sunday School Day is the first Sunday in November. We hope that our children will fully participate in and enjoy both these celebrations.

According to statistics, one-third of the total membership of the CSI are baptised children under sixteen. In one sense children are the most important members of the church. On them depend the future of the church. They bring much joy and laughter to the parents. The activities of a home are centred on the children. The parents naturally wish to do their very best for their offspring. While so much love is showered on them and so much is expected from them, the church seems to be hardly concerned. Neither any diocese nor the Synod has a full-time worker for ministry among the children. A writer who has recently made a study of our church has observed that 'Sunday School work in many congregations does not receive the proper care that it deserves'. He has further stated that 'there is a great need for Sunday School material particularly for teachers, but there is no good material available'. In recent years while the churches have started to introduce 'festivals' for various occasions, hardly any of them celebrate a festival for children.

Greater recognition is to be given to children in the life of our churches. Plans must be drawn up for their participation at various levels. They should be encouraged to think and study together. Library facilities, books and other materials must be made available to them. The writer mentioned above has also said that 'in many congregations there will not be enough money to buy four booklets of 75 paise each for every pupil every year'. Although it may be a fact, provisions must be made in the church budget and the well-to-do parishes can also help the poorer churches. Children them-

selves should be encouraged to draw up their own budget and raise money through their own collections as well as from other sources. They can also be challenged to have their own project to share their resources with the needy children in other places. In the church service itself they can be encouraged to bring the elements for communion, take the collection, help in the distribution of hymnals and read lessons. Through special competitions children can be encouraged to write prayers, poems, plays and to enact them. The adult members should learn to listen to what the children have to say about the church and its practices. The church must be willing to take their suggestions.

Certainly faith cannot be taught and every presbyter knows the difficulty in preaching to the children. And quite a few do not like to be preached at also! We need volunteers on a regular basis in every church to spend time with the children to share their faith and biblical insights. Besides all these there should be occasions for children to bring their friends, particularly those belonging to other faiths, to participate in their joy and to celebrate in thanksgiving for the many gifts from God. These need not be religious occasions but opportunities to manifest through special events the common heritage and unity of all children.

There is a great need for co-ordination between the organised programmes of the churches and the daily life in homes. Children are the best policemen of the adults. Even a little lie or a case of minor dishonesty by adults will be known and exposed by the children. They should see and experience the unity between what they hear in the church and that which is practised at home. The church and the home, the children and the adults are equally important and are responsible before God for the world around us. As we specially remember the children of our land during this month we pray God for His granting of wisdom and understanding and a deepening of their Faith.



# The Christian Contribution to Nation Building

The people's government faces several problems and obstacles, as it tries its best to give a clean rule of peace, prosperity, and justice to all the people of the land and to guarantee a true welfare state. In this context the Church in India should plan and undertake more services for the people and in the midst of people in ways more effective and intimate than before. The church must become the church of the people, identifying itself with their culture except for its deep faith and absolute loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ. The church still seems to appear to the people of this land as something foreign, so much so that it has been remarked that the Indian Christians do not involve themselves in the nation's freedom struggles in which they are more spectators at the fringe than active participants in the front. This remark may not be true. But such an observation is made, and we should not remain unconcerned about it.

How has this situation come about? When the French, the British, and the Moghuls came to rule India, they brought their language, their culture, policies and *modus operandi* of their rule and administration. These foreign rulers needed Indians for their administrative work which was carried on in their respective languages. It became necessary for anyone to enter their administrative services to learn their languages. It was an odd mixture of the culture of the land and that of the rulers. All these adaptations and adoptions happened in most cases only to please and satisfy the rulers, to maintain some dignity and status in the sight of the rulers who felt encouraged and confident that they could trust and employ them in their administrations without risk, and also reward them with better offices and honours. There were also some in the land who kept to their orthodox cultural ways. They kept aloof from any contamination of foreign civilizations.

After the arrival of the chaplains, and later of many foreign missionaries from the U.K, European countries, U.S.A., Canada etc., those Indians who accepted the Christian faith felt more akin to them because of their common faith, and took to the life-styles of the cultures of those fine and loving missionaries who were their spiritual fathers. These Indian Christians, in almost all cases, except very few, identified themselves with the foreign missionaries and rulers to such an extent that they did not give due regard to or did not care much for the Indian cultural heritage as such. They might have felt that anything of the local culture was vitiated by Hindu religious habits which, therefore, were not in conformity with the Christian faith. In due course the Indian culture as such did not appear very important and valuable in the sight of the Indian Christians and also other Indians who became accustomed to the western style and civilization.

These people especially the Indian Christians got so much rooted in such a foreign style of living it became

their natural way of life and expression in their daily life, duties, and even special occasions such as weddings and social gatherings. It became the custom of all Christians to sit on benches and worship especially in the urban churches, a habit strange and repugnant to indigenous culture.

As Gandhi appeared on the national scene with the Swarajya Movement, many ideas of revolutionary nature gripped the minds of the people. Use of foreign goods and practice of foreign cultural habits were severely criticised, condemned and discouraged. The *Khadder Movement* grew; thoughtful and patriotic people began to wear khadi clothes; national style of life become popular. National culture was revived. In all these changing conditions the Indian Church and its community in general remained unchanged. After independence, the vigour of the revival of national culture slackened and there were people who slid back to their old ways of the British times. When Christians are reminded that they are still following the ways of the foreigners, they retort by remarking; 'The non-Christians too are following such ways; what is wrong if we do so?'

What is culture? Why should anyone consider the values of one's culture? Culture is a result of encounters and adjustments with nature, climate, environmental conditions, and of deep and constant reflection on the eternal values in the given background throughout the past numerous centuries to be able to live powerfully, successfully and comfortably, making due progress towards prosperity and security using all the available natural and national resources. Natural surroundings and climatic conditions differ from country to country, therefore culture and its development differ from country to country. Wherever certain things are common, congenial and valuable in another culture, they are profitably appropriated to enrich one's own. The Japanese people are an interesting example of such national, cultural and economic development without losing their own basic national cultural value.

The Indian church is considering at this juncture what and how it could contribute towards the enrichment and development of our people's government. The people must see that there is genuine desire and action in the church without any thought of vested interests. We should be mindful of our national interests and assist the government in such fields as Harijan and tribal welfare, economic progress, cottage and small-scale industries, removal of unemployment, job-oriented education, rural welfare and development with special reference to health, agriculture, irrigation and prohibition both in urban and rural areas.

There is a temptation to keep to white collar services, and not accept the hard and uncomfortable work in

(Continued on page 4)



# Struggle for Community in the Promised Land

The entry into Canaan was the most exciting experience for the people of Israel. Till this time they were a nomadic people moving throughout the length and breadth of the fertile crescent area of the Ancient Near East. God promised the land of Canaan to the patriarchs (Gen. 12 : 1-3; 15 : 17-19), but they did not settle down. They moved with their cattle in search of pastures and finally when there was a famine in the land moved into Egypt. It is interesting to observe that when Moses sent spies into Canaan, the Canaanites were living in plenty, with Vineyards and the spies brought pomogrates, figs and grapes. They reported that it was a land flowing with milk and honey (Num. 13 : 27). While the Israelites were slaving in Egypt, the Canaanites were working hard and producing food and transforming the land of famine into a land flowing with milk and honey. Even at this point Israel wanted to return to Egypt under a new leader (Num. 14 : 4). It was young Joshua and Caleb who persuaded the people and were nearly stoned. Israel would rather go into the slums of Goshen than move to a land flowing with milk and honey.

The nomad always moved in search of new pastures. When grass was no longer available in a place, their God promised them grass and water in a distant place and so they moved out. It is said that the gods of the nomads were the gods of the fathers, who also moved with their people promising, leading and guiding them to new pastures. The temple was also a tent. Albrecht Alt has pointed out that the gods of the nomads moved about with their worshippers promising and leading them to new lands with grass and water. But these deities were not credited with creative powers to produce food and fodder in the place where the people lived. When Israel entered into Canaan they were attracted by the local deities who were attributed with creative powers to produce corn, oil and fodder for cattle in one place. The gods of these settled people were also settled in the place where the worshippers lived and were not obliged to move about, nor was it necessary for them to lead their people to new areas in search of food, fodder and water.

When Israel entered into Canaan, in spite of the repeated reminders about Yahweh's great deeds by the prophets, they ran after the Baalim of the land mainly because of these creative powers of the local deities. The Israelites very soon attributed these creative powers

to Yahweh. In Gen. 14 : 19 ff., when Melchizedek blessed Abraham 'by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth', Abraham swears 'by Yahweh the God Most High, maker of heaven and earth'. Here is an attempt to attribute the power of creation to Yahweh who was originally a nomadic deity. Thus there is a change in theology at the time of settlement in Canaan—the God of promise is associated with blessing and the God of leading and guidance with creative powers. Theological ideas are important in this transition period from a nomadic to a sedentary culture. The community in Canaan was possible because of this theological renewal and reinterpretation. But this transition was not without challenge by the traditionalists.

There are two important views in the Pentateuch about the settlement :

1. The Yahwist sees the settlement as the greatest boon bestowed by Yahweh upon the people of Israel and describes Canaan as a land flowing with milk and honey (Ex. 33 : 3). The Elohist on the other hand, considers Canaan as a place of test, temptation and snare for Israel (Ex. 34 : 11).

2. The Yahwist has a broader view of society. He envisages the possibility of living together in harmony with the local people in mutual support. The Elohist does not want any association with the local people. He wants Israel to be a holy and a pure nation. This later led to the narrow nationalism of Deuteronomy. The Yahwist sees this exclusive election theology as a great danger to Israel. Therefore he enlarges the history of Israel by prefacing the story of the election and the patriarchal narratives (Deut. 26 : 5-9) with the primeval history. This again is closely related the creation story emphasized in the Canaanite religions. The Yahwist points out that God was responsible for the whole fallen mankind, made a covenant with them and only chose Israel for mission to all the families of the earth. Thus he provides a theological basis for co-operation and community with the people of the land. *The book of Joshua* tells of the total destruction of the Canaanites and division of Canaan amongst the Israelite tribes by Lot. *The writer of Judges* on the other hand points out how the local people were not driven out as they were determined to be there and that only later they were reduced to serve Israel. Several O.T. scholars



think that the account in Joshua is idealistic and was never actualized but that the picture in Judges is nearer to the truth. The relationship with the local people was established with the patriarchs being associated with the local sanctuaries. It was only in the 7th century as a result of the centralization of worship that Jerusalem became the centre but till then Israel worshipped Yahweh in the local sanctuaries. The theology of God and the community relationships were fostered in these places of worship.

The book of Joshua tells that the Manna stopped the moment Israel began to depend on the produce of the land, the work of their own hands (Josh. 5: 11-12). Israel was thus forced to depend on their own resources. The carefree nomad learned the discipline of agricultural life. Production of the land became the main concern. With agriculture and Monarchy the evils of settled people enter into their community. The prophets condemn these evils and call the people to a life of justice and righteousness. The poor being sold for a pair of sandals and the exploitation by the rich are the content of the prophetic judgement. The failure of the monarchy turned their hopes to the coming messiah who would establish a righteous Kingdom. There developed two types of eschatologies:

(a) Apocalyptic eschatology which looked for the total destruction of the present order and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

(b) Prophetic eschatology which called man to co-operate with God in bringing about the new order. It is this view which brought about major changes and renewal in the Israelite Society. Man is thus invited to be co-worker with God in the ushering in of the new order. Thus the prophets engaged in politics and socio-economic reformation in Israel.

There was a change in the organisation of the community of Israel. The nomadic laws were no longer adequate to the settled community living. Albrecht Alt's research makes a great contribution at this point. He points out that Israel took over the municipal laws of the Canaanite cities and agricultural life and adapted them to their own community living. He distinguishes between two types of laws (1) the apodeictic and (2) the casuistic laws. The casuistic laws with 'If a man does so and so' are the Canaanite laws taken over by Israel, while the apodeictic laws connected with the religious life are the special property of Israelite Yahweh religion. This would indicate that Israel were prepared to live in community with the local people to the extent of incorporating their laws relating to community living. The humanitarian laws in the covenant laws and the care of the widow and the orphan, so often emphasized by the prophets, are in fact seen as the Canaanite community concerns. The Ras Shamra texts have shown these to be Canaanite religious teachings. Even the concept of Righteousness is perhaps a Canaanite concept. G. Fohrer in his lecture at the Swami Vivekananda centenary celebrations in Calcutta points out that but for the Canaanite religion and culture the nomadic Israelites would have remained as a narrow, bigotted fanatic religion. It was the Canaanite culture which enlarged the Israelite understanding of God and their relationship with other peoples.

I would like to suggest certain important features for community living in India today:

1. All programmes for development should aim at all sections of the community. A narrow based development activity has often led to divisions in the local community. Caste and religious distinction should be avoided. Human need should be the criterion for programmes.

2. The local resources, both in men and materials, should be employed in all development activities. Very often people from outside do not understand the local peculiarities.

3. Prophetic critical evaluation and working for a new order of society must be the ultimate goal of all development operations.

4. Encourage all sections of people to engage in some productive manual work. Dignity of labour should be encouraged as part of educational programmes.

The Christian Church and all its institutions should be locally supported and organized in terms of local priorities. The concept of the Christian Church itself needs to be enlarged to emphasize God's concern for all people.

DR. VICTOR PREMASAGAR

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### The Christian Contribution . . .—(Continued from page 2)

difficult places. In some cases the services rendered and the products manufactured by the institutions of the church are beyond the reach, utility and purchase capacity of the ordinary people. It looks as though they are meant only for the elite and the sophisticated of the society. Our services must spread over more to the rural areas and be people-oriented. The church must seek new avenues of loving, witnessing and serving. Jesus did much more than praying and preaching. He went into the midst of the people, identifying himself with them and serving them humbly in their varied circumstances. The church must work to remove the evils in society, build bridges in the tasks of reconciliation and help in people's government in all possible ways. There is much talk about the servanthood of the church; it must become a reality. The government has asked for all-out co-operation from all sections of the people. The efforts of the government must be strengthened and the church must carry on its sacred mission under these critical situations with dedicated planning and doing. The people of this land must be helped to understand the church as their own institution. The church therefore must shed its unnecessary, unimportant and irrelevant 'foreignness', wherever it is found, and become the church of the people and of the country.

BISHOP C. S. SUNDARESAN,  
ACHARYA,  
Deeper Inner Life Ministry.



# BIBLE SUNDAY

December 4, 1977

An Appeal  
from  
The Bible Society of India

When Jesus chose His disciples, He chose them in order that *they might be with Him*, and that He might *send them forth* to proclaim the Gospel (St. Mark 3 : 14). Christians have not always kept in mind this twin-purpose of their calling in Christ. They have often been content just with nurturing their own spiritual life—which is good and necessary—but without realizing that there is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world.

**SCRIPTURES FOR EVANGELISM.** This was the highlight of Bible Society operations during 1977. This year, in addition to supplying normal Scripture needs, the Society brought out new editions and millions of copies which would help the Churches to proclaim the Good News in their neighbourhoods.

There was a three-pronged thrust in producing Scriptures for Evangelism. The first was, to bring out new translations of the Bible in easy-to-read versions which would use today's language. We know that most of our versions were done during the last century. Since then our languages themselves have changed. The traditional religious vocabulary of our old versions may still be meaningful to Christians, but it cannot be assumed it is understood by others too. Recognizing the need for a version which others also can understand, the Bible Society has accepted the policy of having 'Common Language' (i.e. language common to all, the highly educated as well as those educated only a little) translations to supplement existing versions. To proclaim the Good News, it is essential to have it in a form that will be understood.

We are also distributing widely the Good News Bible, a translation in English done by the American Bible Society.

The second effort was to produce Scriptures for New Readers, that is those who have just learnt to read. These Scriptures can be used in a wide variety of situations. For example :

In a learning situation, such as a school, where youngsters can use a graded series to help them improve

their reading skills and read God's word at the earliest possible age.

With newly literate adults, or people who have completed a literacy course and need a graded series of Scripture Selections to help them improve their reading ability.

With second language speakers, New Reader Scriptures are simple, easy to read and understand, and are a great help and encouragement to them.

With marginal readers, or people who have never become skilful readers even though they themselves have reached maturity in life.

The third was distribution of packets containing a number of selected meaningful Scriptures, which will speak the core message of the Bible to a non-Christian reader.

Following up the very successful Scripture Distribution programmes in India which were held last year (Flight 004 and the Triple Three Projects), the Bible Society of India this year is continuing with another programme called Flight IC 11. In this, the 11 Auxiliaries are participating in making available 2,000,000 packets of Scriptures for use in evangelism. In the main these Scripture packets are used in evangelism in rural areas where a large percentage of the population are marginal readers.

On Bible Sunday God is calling us to a fresh act of thanksgiving for His Great gift of the Bible. It is also an occasion for a fresh act of dedication in the Bible cause, which includes not only love for the Bible but also passionate zeal to see that everyone has an opportunity to read it.

Offerings received on Bible Sunday may kindly be made available to the Bible Society of India to help it to continue its work.

Yours in the Service of Christ,

A. E. INBANATHAN.

Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan.



# *The Christian Fellowship, Oddanchatram*

*(The story of an adventure in faith)*

## **A Students' Prayer Group—The Nucleus**

It was nearing the summer vacation in 1948 for the medical school in Miraj, West India. A few of us were meeting for the weekly prayer meeting, this time to make some serious decisions as to what we should do with the rest of our lives. Various needy situations were facing us but the most challenging was the dire need in the neglected rural areas where 80% of people lived but less than 20% of the doctors and medical services were available.

## **A Famine Stricken Rural Area**

Soon our attention was drawn to a drought stricken rural area around Oddanchatram, in South India, where there was no doctor for a distance of 57 kilometres. Many of our well meaning friends discouraged us from going to this area as there was no electricity, no water supply, no communication facilities, no proper schools, not even taxi facility for an emergency. (But today after 21 years, we have all these facilities and over 50 taxis are stationed in Oddanchatram.)

A doctor, a nurse and a pharmacy assistant, formed the first team to venture out but had very little in the way of equipment, drugs or funds but we thought we will only depend on the local people and local resources. There was not even a building to start the work. Finally a Hindu friend offered the use of a dilapidated haunted house. (We are grateful to the devil for haunting the house, as we got this rent-free.) A mud-walled bamboo hut was available for the doctor to stay. At the beginning, hardly any patient came and the few who came were too poor to support the clinic. Our meagre resources were getting exhausted; indeed it was a time of trial and we were wondering whether we had been foolish to start the work here, as we were warned earlier not to start work in such needy areas, without adequate funds in support.

## **An Emergency**

One night, a woman in labour pain was brought; we advised that she should be taken to a bigger centre for an emergency caesarean operation. But the husband pleaded his inability to move her out of this village. As death for both the mother and the child was the only other alternative, we decided to risk an operation. The side room of the kitchen was cleaned up as an operation room, boiled our kerchiefs and bath towels to make the linen, raised a bench as operation table and started the caesarean operation with the few available instruments. Fortunately the child came out with a loud cry to the joy of all.

## **The Turning Point**

This was a turning point for this small clinic. Many people came to see the mother and the child and along with some patients too. The good neighbours opened up their spare room to accommodate the patients. Sometimes the bullock carts in which the patients were brought served as emergency beds, till room was found.

A friend, offered his vacant land for our use. Villagers helped us to erect bamboo sheds to accommodate patients and a 20-bed ward was built. More bamboo sheds were added as more patients came.

## **More People Join the Team**

When more patients came we were short of hands. So an appeal was sent for help saying that here was a great need for medical people but all that we could offer was hard work, hardship, simple living facilities, poor remuneration and our fellowship. A few responded, some of them joined, resigning from well paid and secure jobs. Slowly our income also improved and a Hindu friend kindly offered a new site at a low price to start the permanent buildings. To cut a long exciting story short, the 50 beds were raised to a hundred and then to hundred and fifty and now it is a two hundred bed, well equipped hospital.

## **Leprosy and Tuberculosis Hospital**

As this is an endemic area for leprosy, a leprosy hospital was started in the next village, Ambilikkal, accommodating 75 in-patients with rehabilitation scheme to make the healed ones self-reliant and useful members of society. Tuberculosis is also a major malady in this area. Our tuberculosis centre accommodated 75 in-patients besides giving domiciliary care for a large number. All the gifts that came were used for this project.

## **Rural Health Care**

Though we treated about 30,000 patients an year, performed over 1500 major operations including heart surgery, the health standard of the people remained poor. Many patients who came to the hospital were in the terminal stages of illness, partly due to ignorance and partly due to various difficulties in reaching the hospital early. So health teams started visiting the neighbouring villages which helped us to meet people in their home set-up and detect diseases in the early stages to help to prevent illness. This has proved to be more effective and less expensive in raising the health of the



people. Health is very much linked with the socio-economic situation. This concern had led us to evolve a comprehensive care plan with a socio-economic welfare facet, making use of all the locally available resources and through community participation in the implementation of a total health care programme.

### Community Health Care

A good deal of health care, particularly the preventive and promotive aspects, could be managed by a minimum of trained health workers. This has led us to start a training programme for community health guides.

### Our Objects

The Fellowship has 13 members from various denominations and over hundred others are involved in our work. The members live on the principle of a common purse. The object of our fellowship is to bear Christian witness through a fellowship life, in the ministry of healing, which our Master Physician once initiated, namely healing the whole person, body, mind and spirit, and restoring him to a purposeful living, in a wholesome community.

This article was written by Dr. A. K. Tharien, the first doctor who went to Oddanchatram.

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## *Tirunelveli Celebrates 150 Years Jubilee of Maha Vidwan H. A. Krishna Pillai*

June 26 and 27 of 1977 were two memorable days in the life of Tirunelveli. Though our Maha Vidwan was a native of this place, it was only on this occasion that the people of Tirunelveli learnt many facts about him and were led to acknowledge him as their own.

The celebrations began with Holy Communion Service in the Holy Trinity Cathedral at 5:30 a.m. on the 26th. Dr. V. Gnanasigamani from Madras preached the sermon. At 4 p.m. a public meeting was held in the Centenary Hall, presided over by Rt. Rev. S. Daniel Abraham, Bishop in Tirunelveli. Rev. S. Savaridoss, Convener of the celebration committee, offered the opening prayer: Lyrics and songs of Krishna Pillai were sung. Rev. Captain Y. Samuel welcomed the gathering. Mr. D. A. Dhanapandian, Dr. V. Gnanasigamani and Mrs. Sarojini Baskaran, a representative of Krishna Pillai's family, were the guest speakers. The Bishop said that our Maha Vidwan has earned fame for this Diocese through his *Ratshanya Yathrigam*. Mr. R. S. Jacob said that it was *Narpothagam* that first published *Ratshanya Yathrigam* and other literary works of Krishna Pillai. So it was quite fitting that the July issue of *Narpothagam* had come out as 'Maha Kavi H. A. Krishna Pillai's 150 year Jubilee Malar', which was released by Dr. V. Gnanasigamani. He traced the close connection of Krishna Pillai with *Narpothagam*. Prof. Thanasingh Pandian and Prof. L. R. John,

also spoke about the writings of Krishna Pillai and the lofty ideas contained in these.

After the public meeting there was musical entertainment by Mr. D. A. Dhanapandian of All India Radio. He gave a Carnatic Lyrical rendering of Krishna Pillai's life, conversion and service.

On the 27th, in the evening service in the cathedral, Rev. S. Savaridoss preached a special sermon on how Krishna Pillai received the light and was a light. After the service, Mr. D. A. Dhanapandian gave a performance of Krishna Pillai's songs.

Mr. R. S. Jacob thanked everyone, especially the celebration committee. He proposed that Krishna Pillai's house should be bought and maintained as a memorial hall and that his anniversary should be celebrated every year. With prayer and benediction by Rev. S. Savaridoss the function came to an end.

R. S. JACOB.

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## *30th Anniversary of the C.S.I. at Dornakal*

The Officers of the C.S.I., the members of the Working Committee of the Synod, the Bishops and their wives, celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the C.S.I. in Dornakal on the 26th and the 27th of September 1977.

On the 26th some of the Bishops and members of the Synod Working Committee arrived here and had the committee meetings.

On the 27th at 8 a.m. the Sung Eucharist was celebrated by the Moderator while the sermon was preached by the Deputy Moderator. There were 16 Bishops, 11 wives of the Bishops, the Officers of the Synod, Bishop Designate of the Nandyal Diocese and a large congregation with delegates from the dioceses were present and so the Cathedral was full. At the intercessions the names of the 14 Bishops who had passed away were read. The sermon was inspiring and instructive. Now negotiations are held between the C.S.I., C.N.I., Lutherans and the Orthodox Church to become one Church. Out of the 9 Bishops consecrated on the day of inauguration, six are living, one in South India, one in Ceylon and four in England and three have passed away.

Soon after the service the Cathedral Pastorate W.F. had a sale of *palakarams*. At midday 300 delegates had lunch and at 4 p.m. tea was served for 100 delegates in front of the Bishop's house.

At 5 p.m. in the College Auditorium a public meeting was held when the diocese presented an address of welcome and small gifts to the Bishops and the Synod Officers. The General Secretary, Mrs. Gopal Ratnam, spoke on 'The Impact of the C.S.I. in the C.S.I. and in the World Church' and the Moderator on 'The Impact of the C.S.I. in India'. There was a dance by the Christian Lambadi girls and at night the girls of the hostels gave a variety entertainment.

ALFRED BUNYAN,  
Dornakal.



# *A Statement issued by the members of the Teaching Staff of the United Theological College, Bangalore*

## **Dr. Billy Graham's Good News Festivals in India**

As members of a theological Faculty committed to the task of promoting theological education and training of men and women for the ministry and the mission of the Church in India and to the task of evangelisation we are concerned about the kind of programme that is being arranged for Dr. Billy Graham during his forthcoming visit to India under the title of Good News Festivals.

Obviously the programme is intended mainly for Christians. Dr. Graham is not known to have had any experience of preaching the Gospel to people of other faiths. The people who will be gathering to listen to him will be mostly people with the background of several generations of the Christian faith. The question is at what level will Dr. Graham help the Christians in India to celebrate the Good News. It is at an enormous expense that Dr. Graham's visit and his 'Festivals' or 'Campaigns' are organised. Will the content of the programmes and the results be commensurate with the expenditure in money as well as in peoples' time and energy?

Even though Dr. Billy Graham has won world renown as an evangelist, he is known primarily for a rather simple and one-sided interpretation of the Gospel. We are also aware of the fact that through Dr. Graham's campaigns in different countries some people have received a kind of conversion experience. We are also appreciative of the efforts of Dr. Graham to organise his campaigns in co-operation with the churches without giving room for separatism. However we believe that what the Christian Community in India needs today is growth in maturity of understanding the Gospel and the deepening of life in the Spirit. Even in New Testament times the apostles found it necessary to remind the believers of their calling to grow in maturity, moving from the stage of 'milk diet' to that of 'solid food' (1 Cor. 3 : 2-3; Heb. 5 : 12-14) and from the discussion of rudiments of Christianity to more advanced levels of understanding (Heb. 6 : 1-3). This concern for growth in maturity is even more relevant today when the Church in India faces complex problems of social change, of people's struggle for justice and of relation to people of other faiths. We cannot celebrate Good News Festivals without being aware of the different dimensions of the

Gospel of Jesus Christ for the Indian situation. How far can Dr. Graham with his rather simplistic message and his ignorance of India help the Indian Churches to celebrate Good News Festivals?

We understand that the invitation to Dr. Graham to come to India had been given by some of the leading Bishops and other Church leaders in India. It is a matter of serious concern to us that these leaders seem to have endorsed the festivals without thinking through the implications of the invitation and the programme that was being planned. Do we really need to invite evangelists from abroad to come and organise our celebration of the Good News of Christ? Of course we can invite them to join us in any celebrations we organise.

Another point of concern is that so far Dr. Graham's record has been to support the social and political *status quo* wherever he has organised his campaigns. In the USA all through the Nixon years he fully supported the regime as well as the Vietnam War. In 1972 when he organised a big convention on evangelism in Texas he opposed a demonstration against the Vietnam War on the ground that it was political, even though he had a programme for supporting the Government under the title *For God and Country*. His campaign in South Africa a few years ago was totally unconcerned about the racial oppressions there, as have been his campaigns in the USA during the 1960s. The statements after his recent visit to Hungary where he conveyed to the leaders of the Hungarian Government greetings from President Carter have given the impression that the socio-political structures in Hungary were quite acceptable to him. It is good that he has now abandoned his anti-communism. But his indifference to socio-political realities under which people live and the more serious deduction that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is concerned only with the salvation of the inner soul and has little to do with the transformation of the structures of society is most alarming. When asked about his views on some issues of justice he is reported to have said that he is not an Old Testament Prophet but a New Testament

(Continued on page 10)



# Letters to the Editor

## ELECTIONS TO OFFICES IN CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

Sir,

As one who is watching the progress of the C.S.I. since its inception on 27th September 1947, I suggest the following changes in the methods of electing and/or selecting its office-bearers :

### *Moderator*

There should be an independent Moderator without the charge of a diocese. At each session of the Synod, one suitable person should be elected and a list of such members should be maintained at the Synod office. The Moderator should hold office for five years and the next in the list should be installed in this office at the end of his tenure.

### *Bishops*

Each Diocesan Council, at its session, should elect a person whom they consider to be most suitable for the office of the Bishop and forward the name to the Synod Office which shall maintain a list of such names to be selected to the office of the bishop whenever a vacancy occurs. The appointment should be given to a person preferably from some other diocese.

The Bishop should be transferred after a term of five years in office. This will help them to gather more experience, to broaden their outlook and also to the dioceses to have new heads occasionally. This will also eliminate or reduce the charge of groupism in the diocesan level.

### *District or Circle Chairman*

Each Diocesan Council should elect at least 25% more than their requirements and the diocesan office-bearers should select say two names more than their requirements from this list and submit the same to the executive committee for election. They also should be transferred at least once in five years.

It would be better if the C.S.I. could be divided into few zones or regions and the district ministers or circle chairman transferred within a region consisting of few dioceses.

### *Presbyters*

The selection and training at present leave much more to be desired. Each diocese should maintain a list of those who have the required qualification, aptitude, exemplary life and above all divine calling. It is no use sending a person just because he is a graduate and has applied for enrolment in a theological institute, just to avoid unemployment. I regret to say that as far as

I could see, many of the Presbyters in the C.S.I. are taking it as a profession and not as a calling.

### *Deacons, Elders and Stewards*

At present once in two or three years, an election is held to select members for various Committees in the Church. This system should be scrapped and the following method substituted.

Once in a year there should be a meeting of all communicant members of the church, in which one or more members should be elected as leaders. From these names, a committee of the required number (may be five, seven or twelve) should be drawn strictly in accordance with priority. The committee should function for three or five years according to their diocesan constitution. After this the next panel will function and members of the former team would become eligible for election to be added to the list or the committee will go on for ever but each year one, two or three members at the top will 'retire' and the next equal number of members will fill in the vacancy.

The methods in my opinion will eliminate the possibility of holding unhealthy elections which of late have become just like political elections with all the undesirable characteristics.

It will be very interesting to know the reaction of your readers to these suggestions.

D. K. DHAS.

## WHAT IS IN A NAME ?

In the Ministry of the Word in the Lord's Supper we have two litanies. In both the Litanies there is an intercessory bidding for the Moderator of the C.S.I. and the Bishop of the Diocese and the name of the incumbent has to be included in the bidding.

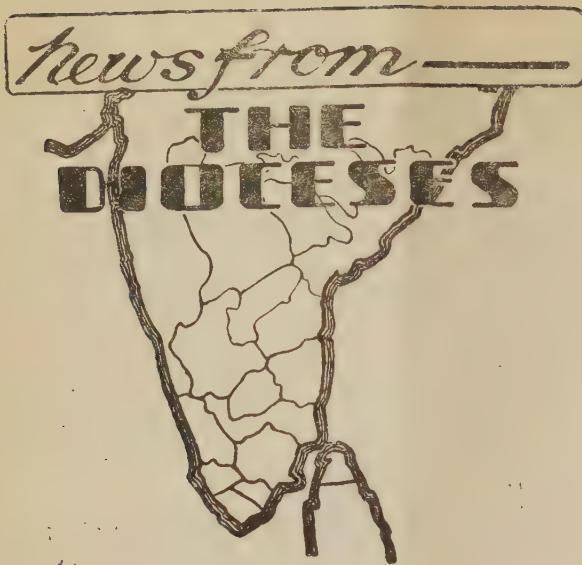
What is the form of the name to be used ? Should the initials be included ? Should the surname also find a place in the intercession ?

Once I was asked to lead the intercession when the Bishop of the Diocese was present. I prayed for the Bishop starting with his initials and ending with the surname. After the service the good Bishop told me 'My name should not be coupled with my surname. My name is only the name given to me at baptism.'

Any comments please ?

REV. O. SIVARAMAIA,  
Bellary.





### KARNATAKA NORTHERN DIOCESE

On 24-9-77 the Bellary Area Council met for a day. This was the Annual Meeting of the Council. It was good to note that a new congregation had come into being since the last meeting at Katriki in Adoni Taluk. The Annual Report of the Jathra at Chikka Bellary was very interesting and encouraging. At the meeting, a congregation at Rayadrug which was in Shimoga area was transferred to Bellary area. This change was made because Bellary is nearer to Rayadrug and moreover Rayadrug is a Telugu area and the congregation needs the ministrations of Telugu knowing church workers.

The Rev. P. J. P. Chandrasekhar paid his first visit to Rayadrug on Tuesday 27-9-77, the 30th Anniversary of the Church of South India. This augurs well for the area.

On 25-9-77 at 10 a.m. five men were ordained deacons in the church by the Rt. Rev. W. V. Karl. The ordinands were the Revds. P. Anandarao, J. Padmakar, B. R. Sarvade, Ravikumar Niranjana and Simon Nadugaddi. The Rev. Dr. Weitzckie of the K.T.C. preached an impressive sermon on the 15th Chapter of St. John's Gospel.

The Rt. Rev. H. D. L. Abraham, retired Bishop, took a leading part in the service. The Holy Trinity Church at Bellary is considered the pro-cathedral of the diocese.

Dr. Mrs. J. Kamala hosted the ordinands and their families, visiting presbyters and members of the pastoral committees of the five congregations in Bellary.

REV. O. SIVARAMAIA,  
Bellary.

The Vacation Bible School in Tirunelvely has been functioning in the Tirunelvely Diocese since 1952 with the aim of teaching the Word of God to the boys and girls who will be the future leaders of the church. God has been using this ministry for the blessing of thousands of children and young people.

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SISTER P. PITCHAMUTHU.

### A Statement. . . . (—Continued from page 8)

evangelist. This is certainly a very un-Biblical distinction.

In India an interpretation of the Gospel which will only support the *status quo* will be most harmful. The Church's context in India is people's struggle against different forms of evil, oppression and injustice and a socio-political structure which permits 60% of the people to live below the poverty line. In many places in India Christians also are victims of unjust and oppressive structures. The situation demands an interpretation of the Gospel which will challenge the *status quo* and help the believers to join others in the quest for a new society. It is, therefore, legitimate to ask in what way the Good News Festivals led by Dr. Graham is expected to deepen the Indian Church's witness to the Good News of Christ, instead of being just an opiate.

We do not want to oppose or dislocate the programmes already arranged for him in India this year. But we would like Dr. Graham to clarify his interpretation of the Gospel in relation to a religiously pluralistic community which India is and the peoples' struggle for social and economic justice before he starts his campaigns in India. In addition we would also like the organisers of his visit to India to plan at least in one or two places two kinds of programmes, one in which he will confer with Indian Christian leaders about priorities in Mission and Evangelism in India and the other with leaders of other faiths as well as secular affairs about the role of Christians or Christian Mission in India. If Dr. Graham is not willing to participate in such programmes we would consider his mission in India not only irrelevant and an extravagant waste of resources but harmful, as it is likely to give a distorted image of the Christian faith and life to believers as well as to others.

J. R. CHANDRAN,  
Principal

United Theological  
College, Bangalore.

(on behalf of all the members  
of the Teaching Staff.)





*Essays in Honour of M. M. Thomas* Edited by Richard W. Taylor; Published by The Christian Literature Society, Madras 1976; Price Rs. 12.

In the Preface the Editor remarks that this book besides being an expression of gratitude for guidance, stimulation and encouragement from colleagues and friends of M. M. Thomas within the movement which is *the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society* in which his leadership has been so vital and crucial, is also the result of the 12 contributors' shared belief with M. M. Thomas in the relevance of the interrelated study of society and religion for responsible and creative study and thinking by Christians in India today.

The subject is dealt with under three themes which are the major areas in which Dr. Thomas had focused his interest.

Part I—*Politics and Society* has four papers; the first by Ninan Koshy deals with 'India's International Relations' traced from the pre-independence times till recent times, from Nehru's claim of India being the 'pivot of Asia' till the present times when it is quite clear that the country needs to evolve a more dynamic and positive foreign policy. The second paper 'Indian Political Culture Amid Transition' by Frank Thakurdas gives a panoramic view of the growth of Indian political ideals and the various influences that have affected them, the disintegration of the old systems and the abandoning of archaic principles to give way to new forces. The Gandhian Satyagraha is discussed as also the force of youth and various forms of protest which have now become so common to us. The essay is an interesting study spotlighting youth and other movements so prevalent today, showing the startling changes that have taken place in our country, and pointing to the growth of new powers and classes. The changing political culture is in a sense owing to the transformation of a feudal economy into a semi-capitalist economy and from there to a semi-socialist society without abandoning democratic powers and institutions.

S. L. Parmar writes on the 'Application of the Christian Concept of Power to the Social Order in the light of our shared quest for World Community'. Recognising the need for a new social order we may conclude that we are dissatisfied with the existing order and this paper suggests general economic aspects of a social order with the aim of pointing out certain important elements of a communitarian economy. The essay touches on the need to be open—a transparency of motivation, power and community; the power of Love which is the Christian basis of power for building world community and such power, says the writer, must have moral moorings, built upon sharing and solidarity with others. The essay looks beyond the welfare state to a 'one-world'. The writer's scholarly approach to this subject is constructively provocative and ends thus: 'Power is seldom relinquished without the use of a counter-power. The quest for world community leaves no choice but to generate such a counter-power and the question is 'what kind of counter-power is in harmony with the Christian ethics of love?'

'Sociologists in Society' is the title of the essay by A. P. Barnabas who states the problem arising from the

position "of the scientist in society; the scientist who should also be regarded as a citizen with attendant responsibilities in ameliorating the problems facing the society he lives in. Social scientists in India today are involved in many areas of responsibility such as Community Development, Family Planning, Public Administration, Health, Housing, Social Work, Nutrition, Tribal Development, Evaluation Studies of the progress of the community development programme as well as other programmes. Each action situation is briefly discussed and the writer points out the close relation between applied research and pure research. Much of applied research would require the support of fundamental research and the contributions of applied social scientists to sociological theories cannot be undermined. 'The historic mission of the social sciences is to enable mankind to take possession of society and the challenge for Indian sociologists is to fulfil that mission.'

Part II deals with *Religion and Culture* and comprises five essays, the first on 'Religion and Mental Health' with a very good report by Erna M. Hoch, a psychiatrist, who goes deeply into the relationship between religion and mental health, brilliantly systematizing the possible correlations with ample illustrations from a variety of backgrounds, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and in conclusion, the writer correctly says in the words of a Kashmiri peasant: '... it is good to have a mosque, church or temple in a village. Without it, people would forget about God. But one also needs something in between oneself and God, as it is dangerous to approach Him too directly and closely.' The writer writes with great understanding of this subject.

'Pitcharamman: Pilgrimage of a Goddess' the title of the next essay by Charles A. Ryerson reads like a very interesting story in the relating of a case study to illustrate in the limited space of a few pages a critical evaluation of the influences that have come to bear on the growth of loyalty to caste, region and nation all at the same time. As illustrated by the tracing of the forest goddess Pitcharamman who becomes enshrined in a new temple, the writer uses this goddess as a focus for extended family loyalties and a part of a network of growing relationships, mythic-ritual, social-political, local, regional and national, traditional and modern, all of which is a challenge to the straight forward linear movement from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gessellschaft*. The mythic-ritual past as enshrined in the family's myth of origin has grown stronger and the family's national social-political history has deepened. Modernization has made a deep impact on the Indian tradition and is penetrated by more traditional loyalties.

T. K. Thomas writes an essay on the 'Liberation Themes in the Indo-Anglian Novel'. He starts with an explanation of what is meant by liberation themes and sets out to explain the theme from the perspective of Christian theology. The treatise is on Literature and Liberation, its purpose of pleasure and utility not merely in co-existence but in creative coalescence. The writer discusses popular literature, tragedy, comedy, and then gets on to the Indo-Anglian literature. Some more well known writers of the Indo-Anglian novel are



mentioned such as Mulk Raj Anand, Kamala Markandaya, Bhabani Bhattacharya and R. K. Narayan, with copious excerpts from their writings. The themes that recur in Indo-Anglian writings are examined, such as old and new values, untouchability, caste, homelessness and landlessness. The concern of all our writers is with man and what it means to be man. The search for values is the search for maturity and the end of liberation is the realisation of human maturity in all its fullness. Human maturity and community then are the goals of liberation as aptly concluded by this writer who says: 'the creative writer is as much concerned with man and the universe of faiths as the theologian and that is why a dialogue between the creative writer and the theological student can be mutually enriching'.

Jonathan H. Thumri, in the introduction to his essay on 'Vaisnavism in Manipur' states that he will deal with Vaisnavism which the Meiteis who form the largest community among the peoples of Manipur have adopted. He sets out a history of Vaisnavism in Manipur relating the historical accounts of its origin, the main features of Meitei Vaisnavism, its religious philosophy, the Ras Lila or Manipuri Dance, Religious Functionaries, Festivals, Food and Drink. The Meiteis have an inherent love for festivities, music and dances and Hinduism has amply provided for them through various events celebrated throughout the year. Meitei Vaisnavism is so tied up with innumerable festivals that there is always the danger of taking these not merely as a means to an end but as ends in themselves, thus losing sight of the central emphasis of Vaisnavism as essentially a *bhakti* cult.

'Reverence and Worship' by Rita Rudra points out that India is the melting pot of so many religions providing ample opportunity to find a basis for an understanding between different faiths. Worship is an experience and an expression, the outward form of an inner belief and religion consists of a theoretical and a practical element. Most religions have outlined different kinds of worship. Hierarchy in the spiritual realm in India is discussed in some detail along with idolatry and hagiocracy. The writer concludes with words quoted from Romain Rolland: 'Of all rivers the most sacred is that which gushes out eternally from the depths of the soul, from its rocks and sands and glaciers. Therein lies primeval force and that is what I call religion...'

Part III deals with *Indian Christian Theology* and the first essay by Mathew P. John is on 'Incarnation and Translation'. Why God became man in Christ has been a live topic in Christian thought from its beginning. The mystery of our faith is Christ manifested in the body. The manifestation of Christ is interpreted in the copying, translation, printing, distribution, leading to reading and understanding of the Gospels. The Church is the extension of the Incarnation and the Scriptures and their translation are an extension of the Incarnation.

'Chakkarai and the Indian Church' is the title of the very relevant and extremely interesting essay by T. V. Phillip who discusses the distinctive contribution made by Indian theology during the last 100 years to the forms and modes of thought among creative theologians. Very eminent names feature in this essay such as P. Chenchiah, V. Chakkarai among others, who belonged to a group known as the 'Madras Re-thinking Group'. This essay is a fine piece of interpretive writing on the subject of expression of the life and witness of Christians

in the Indian situation. Like other Indian Christian thinkers before them, Christology occupies the central place in the writings of the Rethinkers. They believed that the central point of Christianity is the experience of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom of God occupies the central place in the Gospel, not the Church. Many passages from these writers are quoted. The essay is meaningful in our context today. Elaborate mention is made of Indianisation of the Church which warrants close study. Indianisation is neither a mere change in externals nor a translation of the content of Western Christianity in terms of Indian religious thought. It is not only the outer part but also the inward parts that need to be Indianised. To Chakkarai, Indianisation is not merely rejecting this or that of the West or taking this or that from the Indian religious tradition, it is the result of the Indian soul experiencing Jesus Christ and finding its own channel of expression. Indianisation is related to the very being of the Church, to the realm of *atman* and is not merely a matter of geography, not something artificial but the natural way the Indian Christian community expresses its life. It is thus a spiritual concept that, according to Chakkarai should Indianise the Church. 'The orange robe does not make a sanyasi. It is the experience behind it that creates the robe.'

'Indian Theology and the Problem of History' by Samuel Rayan is dealt with under subheadings: History and Theology, History, Theology and Indian Traditions, History and Hindu traditions, Patterns of history, Indian theology and Praxis. The essay relates each of these subjects to Christianity very ably. The problem of history is vital to Christian faith and Christian theology. Indian thought and religions tend to naturalize history rather than historicize nature. The writer traces the growth of history of the people's struggle for new patterns of living and relating, from Vedic ritualism and Brahminic domination to Upanishadic experience, to Buddhist humanism with a secular-social accent to the Bhakta's untrammelled joy in the discovery of God's great and tender love... Jesus is one who 'Am before Abraham was'. He is a particular historical reality but one that spans the universe of time and gives the cosmos basis, consistency, direction and meaning. He is the Beginning and the End now present within the historical process. And in the next paragraph, 'History is God's gift and our human task. The theological problem of history is the problem of the inward history of each man, of his heart's experiences, struggles and decisions, of the captivities and exoduses which occur within his spirit and of such interior conflicts as are described in Romans 7, in the Book of Revelations and in the opening chapter of the Gita. The heart therefore must be taken into account more seriously than till now in all conceptions of history. It is the Dharmakshetra where crucial battles are fought and won or lost.'

In Christ God has acted in world history. God has a world history because he makes it in measureless, forgiving, ingathering love and dwells in it to heal and grace it and give it human wholeness.

This book is not easy reading, but excellent reading and each and every contributor has written in a style to attract the academician as well as the lay reader and these essays are a must for all who are interested in this subject.

LALITHA MANUEL.



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*and*

Dr. AKBAR HAQQ

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*December 11th, 1977*

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Kottayam : *December 5th & 6th, 1977*

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